

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCSE-00 SCA-01 AID-05 SS-15 H-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 NSC-05

SCCT-01 L-03 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /061 W

----- 066833

O R 261230Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8317

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BUKAVU

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 DAR ES SALAAM 1703

USIA FOR IBS, IPS

NAIROBI FOR VOA

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC (SMUTS, SMITH AND HUNTER)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S PRESS BRIEFING

1. AMBASSADOR CARTER MET WITH NEWSMEN FOR INFORMAL BRIEFING

10:30 A.M. LOCAL TIME MAY 26. PRESENT WERE TONY AVIRGAN -

ABC, BBC, AP; ANDREW TORCHIA - AP; MICHAEL FATHERS - REUTERS;

JAMES PRITCHETT - MARKNEWS; FOLLOWING IS ROUGHT TRANSCRIPT:

2. AMBASSADOR CARTER OPENED BY SAYING THIS NOT REALLY A PRESS

CONFERENCE BUT MERELY AN INFORMAL MEETING--INFORMATION GIVEN

WAS FOR THE PRESSMEN'S OWN PURPOSES, AND NOT FOR DIRECT RE-

PRODUCTION. AMB WENT ON TO SAY HE WAS NOT TRYING TO BE DIFFICULT

RE RELEASE OF INFO, BUT THE SAFETY OF THE THREE REMAINING

STUDENTS WAS UPPERMOST TO EMBASSY AND BARBARA SMUTS.

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3. AMB SAID WHAT PRESS HAD SO FAR WAS JUST ABOUT ALL THE

SUBSTANTIVE INFORMATION THAT WE CAN DISCUSS AT THIS TIME.
AFTER MEETING WITH PRESIDENT NYERERE TODAY, WE MAY BE ABLE
TO SAY MORE.

4. AMB SAID HE COULD GIVE ONLY FEW ADDITIONAL BITS AND PIECES
TO PRESS NOW: MORE STUDENTS COMING IN FROM KIGOMA--SOME ARE
NOW STAYING WITH THE BRYCESONS AND OTHERS WILL BE STAYING WITH
EMBASSY FAMILIES. BARBARA SMUTS IS STAYING WITH US AT THE
RESIDENCE AND HER MOTHER ARRIVING TOMORROW MORNING (MAY 27)
FROM MICHIGAN; THE FATHERS OF STEVE SMITH AND CARRIE HUNTER
COME IN ON WEDNEJSDAY (MAY 28).

5. BARBARA SMUTS IS WELL. EMBASSY HAS NO INTENTION OF KEEP-
ING PRESS FROM TALKING WITH HER AFTER SHE SEES PRESIDENT
NYERERE--AND I LEAVE THAT TO HER DISCRETION. OBVIOUSLY WE
ARE NOT DIRECTING HER IN TERMS OF HER REMARKS.

6. IN ADDKITION TO OUR CONCERN FOR THE SAFETY OF THE HOSTAGES,K
I SHOULD SAY THAT THE GOVERNMENT WITH THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
AT THIS POINT IN TIME IS THE TANZANIAN GOVERNMENT, SINCE THE
CRIME WAS COMMITTED IN TANZANIA. I KNOW THEY HAVE BEEN VERY
CONCERNED AND EXTREMELY ACTIVE IN PURSUING THE MATTER, FROM
FONMIN MALECELA ON DOWN--EVEN INCLUDING PRESIDENT NYERERE.

7. NEGOTIATIONS REGARDING REMAINING HOSTAGES WILL BE CARRIED
OUT BY TANGOV IN CLOSE CONSORT WITH EMBASSY. WE ARE WORKING
WITH ALL GOVERNMENTS AROUND LAKE TANGANYIKA AREA. END STATEMENT.

Q. DO YOU HAVE GENERAL IDEA ABOUT MEETING WITH PRESIDENT NYERERE--
THERE WAS QUITE A TIME LAPSE BETWEEN THE TIME LETTER ARRIVED AND WHEN
SHE IS SUPPOSED TO SEE PRESIDENT, WHY WAS THIS?

A. IT WAS AT OUR SUGGESTION--PRESIDENT PREPARED TO SEE MISS
SMUTS LAST NIGHT--HOWEVER, SHE HAD NOT BEEN TO BED SINCE LAST
FRIDAY. IN ALL FAIRNESS TO HER, WE FELT SHE DESERVED CHANCE
FOR A NIGHT'S REST AND BATH BEFORE SEEING THE PRESIDENT.

Q. IS THE LETTER ADDRESSED TO PRESIDENT NYERERE STILL IN
EMBASSY'S POSSESSION?

A. LETTERS DELIVERED TO THE PRESIDENT LAST NIGHT.

Q. HOW MANY LETTERS ARE THERE?

A. THREE LETTERS TO PRESIDENT NYERERE

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ONE LETTER TO AMERICAN AMBASSADOR
LETTERS TO PARENTS FROM REMAINING CAPTIVE STUDENTS.
ONE LETTER TO DUTCH AMBASSADOR
ONE LETTER TO AMERICAN EMBASSY (IN ADDITION TO ONE ADDRESSED
TO AMERICAN AMB)

THAT'S MY RECOLLECTION AT THIS TIME. (FYI: THERE
WAS ALSO A LETTER TO AMBASSADOR OF ZAIRE IN DAR).

Q. HAVE THE LETTERS TO THE PARENTS BEEN OPENED?

A. NO; HOLDING THEM FOR PARENTS' ARRIVAL.

Q. ARE HUNTER'S PARENTS ARRIVING ALSO?

A. HUNTER AND SMITH ARRIVING TOGETHER ON WEDNESDAY MORNING.

Q. WHEN ARE BERGMANN'S PARENTS ARRIVING?

A. NO WORD ON THEIR ARRIVAL. THERE IS A LETTER TO DUTCH AMB
AND LETTER TO HER PARENTS.

Q. DID THE LETTERS ADDRESSED TO YOU AND TO USG HAVE ANY DEMANDS
ON USG?

A. NO DEMANDS ON USG.

Q. DEMANDS ON ANYONE ELSE?

A. YES

Q. WHAT ARE THEY?

A. CANNOT ANSWER THAT AT THIS TIME.

Q. HAVE HEARD STORY OF ONE MILLION DOLLARS RANSOM--REPORTED
FROM UPI LONDON. WHAT ABOUT THAT?

A. I HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE STORY--BUT HAVE NOT SEEN IT. IT IS
AN INACCURATE REPORT AS I UNDERSTAND IT.

Q. THE IDENTITY OF GROUP RESPONSIBLE--HAS IT BEEN VERIFIED?

A. NOT VERIFIED.

Q. WERE THE LETTERS SIGNED BY THE GROUP?

A. YES

Q. DO THE LETTERS CONTAIN MEANS FOR COMMUNICATING BACK TO THE
KIDNAPPERS?

A. NO COMMENT.

Q. WERE THE LETTERS SIGNED BY AN INDIVIDUAL?

A. CANNOT GO INTO THAT.

Q. HAVE ANY DEMANDS BEEN MADE ON ANYBODY EXCEPT THE TANZANIAN
GOVERNMENT?

A. NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE.

Q. SO THERE WERE DEMANDS TO TANZANIAN AUTHORITIES?

A. STAND BY MY ABOVE STATEMENT.

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FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8318
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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 DAR ES SALAAM 1703

USIA FOR IBS, IPS

NAIROBI FOR VOA

Q. WHAT IS GOVT OF ZAIRE DOING?
A. WE JUST KNOW THEY WERE INVOLVED IN SEARCH OPERATIONS TOWARDS
END OF WEEK.
Q. ARE YOU AWARE OF ANY COMMUNICATION TO PRES. MOBUTU?
A. NO.
Q. ARE THESE PEOPLE FROM ZAIRE? CAN YOU CONFIRM IT?
A. NO, I CANNOT CONFIRM THAT.
Q. ANY GENERAL IDEA ABOUT THIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT NYERERE?
WHEN IT WILL TAKE PLACE?
A. WE JUST DONT KNOW--ARE WAITING FOR A CALL MOMENTARILY.
Q. IS MISS SMUTS READY FOR MEETING?
A. YES.
Q. WHO WILL ATTEND MEETING?
A. MISS SMUTS, MYSELF AND PRESIDENT NYERERE.
Q. IS BARBARA SMUTS AWARE OF CONTENTS OF LETTERS TO NYERERE?
A. NO
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Q. IS ZAIRE STEPPING UP MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN THAT AREA?
A. I AM NOT AWARE OF THAT.
Q. DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT GROUP THAT DID THIS?
A. I REALLY DO NOT WANT TO PURSUE THIS AT THIS POINT. I
THINK WE CAN TALK ABOUT IT LATER ON.
Q. AFTER MEETING WILL WE BE ABLE TO LEARN ABOUT THE DEMANDS?
A. WILL HAVE TO FIND OUT TANZANIAN VIEWS ON IT. I DON'T WANT
TO PRE-EMPT THEIR ROLE OR PREJUDICE WHAT THEY HAVE IN MIND.
I AM NOT TRYING TO BE COY OR DIFFICULT--I AM TRYING TO BE
RESPONSIVE. WE ARE IN A DELICATE SITUATION AS LONG AS THE
THREE REMAINING STUDENTS ARE IN JEOPARDY. MEANWHILE, I MUST
ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION.
Q. HOW MANY DEMANDS WERE MADE?
A. NO COMMENT.
Q. DO YOU KNOW IF THE TANZANIAN GOVT HAS POLITICAL DETAINEES?
A. DON'T KNOW.
Q. WHY WAS BARBARA SMUTS CHOSEN TO RETURN?

A. SHE DOESN'T KNOW--HER CAPTORS CHOSE HER.

Q. DID THEY THREATEN THE LIVES OF THE OTHERS?

A. THE LIVES OF ALL THE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN THREATENED SINCE TIME OF CAPTURE.

Q. I MEAN WERE THEY VERBALLY THREATENED?

A. SHE SAID IF ANYTHING WENT AWRY, THEIR LIVES WOULD BE IN JEOPARDY.

Q. ANY IMPRESSION AS TO HOW SHE SPENT THE SIX DAYS SHE WAS THERE?

A. YES, I HAVE. THERE WAS NO MOLESTATION, NO MALTREATMENT OF THE FOUR. THEY WERE GIVEN ALMOST SOLICITOUS CARE, REASONABLY WELL FED. THEY WERE NOT TIED, BOUND, OR BLINDFOLDED.

Q. WHERE IS THE LOCATION OR POSITION OF THE CAMP?

A. NO COMMENT.

Q. WERE THE FOUR KEPT TOGETHER?

A. YES, AND ALLOWED TO COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER.

Q. ALL LETTERS TO PARENTS WERE PERSONAL LETTERS?

A. YES.

Q. THEY WERE IN ZAIRE?

A. WHO SAID SO?

Q. THIS IS WHAT JANE GOODALL SAID.

A. THEN QUOTE JANE GOODALL ON THAT, NOT ME.

Q. THEN YOU SAY THEY WERE NOT IN ZAIRE?

A. LET'S NOT PLAY GAMES.

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Q. ANY INDICATION THERE WAS ANY PRIOR KNOWLEDGE THIS MIGHT POSSIBLY HAPPEN--ANY RUMOR OF THIS--KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY?

A. NO. I HAVE BEEN TOLD THIS IS THE FIRST SUCH INCIDENT IN TANZANIA.

Q. ANY INDICATION THEY MIGHT TRY TO DO SOMETHING ELSE?

A. NOT SO FAR.

CARTER

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Message Attributes

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